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CITY OF TORONTO
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

August 1, 1984

To: Neighbourhoods Committee

Subject: Proposal for the Re-organization of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.

Origin: Neighbourhoods Committee, April 5, 1984 (c71nhc84072:81)

Comments:

Background:

At their meeting of April 5, 1984, the Neighbourhoods Committee reviewed proposals for developments on the Leslie Street Spit. At that time, the Committee also decided to request the Commissioner of Planning and Development to report to the Committee on any implications of a possible re-organization of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and its effect on the City of Toronto, together with any change in policy on land development matters.

1. Purpose of the Study.

In June, 1983, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority requested that a review of the Authority's organization and mandate be undertaken. This review was carried out by the Chief Administration Officer of Metropolitan Toronto, in conjunction with members and staff of the Authority, the other Regional Municipalities, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. The review was completed in February, 1984.

2. Content of the Study.

(a) Structure and Membership Changes Recommended.

A basic theme of the review is the need to streamline the size and structure of the Authority. Currently, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority Board consists of fifty-three members drawn from the Regional Municipalities of Peel, Durham, York and Metropolitan Toronto. Half of these representatives are non-elected citizen appointees. The review authors found the size of the Board to be inefficient in terms of decision-making and not conducive to meeting quorums. As a result, much of the real decision-making power has been concentrated in the smaller Executive Board. To remedy this situation, it was recommended that the Board would be reduced in size to twenty-nine members. The new Conservation Authority Board would be composed as follows:

Region of York:	5
Region of Durham:	3
Region of Peel:	5
Metropolitan Toronto:	13
Province:	3

All Board members, except the Provincial representatives, would be elected officials. It would be up to each region to choose the manner in which their representatives would be selected. However, in order to ensure local area Municipality representation, it is suggested that the Metropolitan Toronto representatives comprise the seven members of the Metropolitan Toronto Parks and Property Committee, plus one representative from the Metropolitan Council to represent each of Etobicoke, North York, York, East York, Scarborough, and Toronto.

The Executive Committee, to which many of the important powers of the Authority have been delegated, currently comprises the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Authority, as well as the chairmen of the nine advisory boards. Therefore, there is not necessarily any regional basis of representation on the Executive Committee. The review recommends that a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and seven Executive members continue to be elected from amongst the Authority Board members and that voting rules be established to ensure that the three regional municipalities are assured one member each, Metropolitan Toronto is assured three members and the Province is assured one member. This would ensure that the composition of the Executive would reflect that of the Board and all contributing Regional municipalities would be represented.

In keeping with the streamlined Authority structure, it is proposed to replace the existing four watershed boards and five advisory boards with three standing committees with responsibilities as follows:

Water and Related Land Management Committee:	Flood Control Erosion and Sediment Control Storm Water Management Waterfront Development Shoreline Management
Conservation and Related Land Management Committee:	Watershed Recreation Conservation Land Management Community Relations Heritage Conservation
Finance and Administration Committee:	Finance Property and Land Acquisition Legal Personnel

Administration

(b) Mandate

The report recommends that the program objectives which constitute the Authority mandate remain unchanged. The key activities under the mandate of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority include: preparation of watershed plans, flood control programs, erosion and sediment control programs, storm water management programs, acquisition and management of lands for conservation purposes, recreation facility development within conservation areas, the creation of recreational lands along the Lake Ontario Waterfront, shoreline management and erosion control, and the development of Heritage Conservation areas such as Black Creek Pioneer Village.

(c) Funding Mechanisms.

The two greatest funding sources for Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority activities have traditionally been the Provincial Ministry of Natural Resources and Municipal levies paid by participating regional governments. The Ministry normally has provided grants for fifty to fifty-five per cent of the costs of development projects and fifty per cent of the administrative costs of the Authority, but does not generally provide funding for recreation or heritage programs.

Since levels of Provincial funding have remained static over several years, the Ministry's share of overall Authority funding has declined from thirty-eight per cent in 1979 to twenty-nine per cent in 1983. As municipal levies have been kept in balance with provincial contributions, municipal funding has not increased significantly in recent years. Municipal levies have declined from thirty-eight to thirty-four percent of total funding in the 1979-1983 period with increased visitor revenues and one-time grants making up the difference. In 1983, the funding sources were as follows:

Municipal Levies:	5.8 million
Ministry of Natural Resources Grant:	5.2 million
Revenues:	4.1 million
Other sources:	1.5 million

Because of the static level of funding and the propensity of the Province to fund capital project-oriented work rather than recreational/heritage programs, the review concludes that certain municipal needs are not being met. The development of the Lake Ontario waterfront is unfolding at a slower rate than anticipated and desired and heritage programs, such as the Black Creek Pioneer Village, are in financial difficulty.

The review also concludes that Metropolitan Toronto shoulders a disproportionately high share of the municipal levies for recreation.

In order to ameliorate this siutation, the Review recommends:

- That the regional municipalities share the cost of the conservation areas program on the basis of the number of users generated. This would result in smaller contributions from Metropolitan Toronto and larger contributions from Peel Region and Durham region.

- That Metropolitan Toronto fully fund the Black Creek Pioneer Village and Conservation Area. Other regions would be responsible for heritage programs in their area.

- That a higher level of funding be allocated to the Lake Ontario waterfront development program with Metropolitan Toronto providing the additional funding. The increased costs to Metro Toronto for Black Creek and Waterfront development would be partly offset by lesser contributions to the Conservation Areas program.

The following chart, using the 1983 Authority budget as a base, illustrates the impact of the Review's recommendations on municipal levies for recreation (in thousands of dollars):

	Waterfront*	Conservation Area Operations	Black Creek	$ Change
Metro	+340	-216	+83	+207
Durham	+ 65	+ 83	- 9	+139
Peel	- 19	+155	-35	+101
York	- 18	- 22	-39	- 79
	+368	0	0	+368

(d) Regional Response to the Study

On April 10, 1984, the Council of Metropolitan Toronto adopted the recommendations of the Review with one amendment. Rather than requiring that all regional representatives be elected officials, it was recommended that the appointments be made by each Region and Metro in accordance with their own standards. Metropolitan Toronto Council recommended that their representatives consist of:

- The Chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Property Committee;

- six members of Metropolitan Council to include, if possible, one member from each of the area Municipalities; and

- six citizen appointments.

The Review recommendations were endorsed by the Regional Municipalities of York and Durham. Peel Region endorsed the report, but wished to see the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority mandate expanded to include water quality.

(e) Implications of the Re-organization upon the City of Toronto Waterfront.

The net development impact of the re-organization would be the higher level of funding to accelerate the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority waterfront development program. Within the City of Toronto, this would enable the more rapid implementation of developing plans for the Leslie Street Spit/Aquatic Park. The Metropolitan Corporation would become an even more significant funding source for this development and all watershed recreation programs would have to be approved by Metro Council before being placed in the Authorities plans. The Metropolitan Corporation has long been designated the managing agency for Aquatic Park once it is complete.

Recommendation:

That this report be received.

Stephen G. McLaughlin
Commissioner

PB/tc